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March 1997

Volume XXIV Issue 3

Jim's Journal



Volume II

Golly, in just 25 more days Spring will arrive. Of course that brings visions of the Dayton Hamfest which is just around the corner. I'm sure that most of you who make the yearly trek have noticed that the prices for accommodations have soared in recent years. Don Miller, W9NTP who puts on a slow scan TV seminar every year, has had to move locations, the price has went from \$150 to over \$1800 for conference room rental! But don't despair, the Fort Wayne Radio Club has prevailed. For the uninflated price of \$15.00 you can have a deluxe bus ride to and from Dayton, including a continental breakfast and soft drinks and still be back in the same day. You better hurry though, there are only 15 seats left. For reservations contact Kevin Adam at 490-7312.

"Awesome" was one of the terms heard during our last Club meeting. The tour through the Fort Wayne Water filtration plant kept neatly every one of the forty or so members spell bound for two hours. This huge sprawling structure was originally constructed in 1932 and added on to in later years. From its classic architecture to its immense settling tanks, pipes and pumps, it is destined to be an unforgettable experience. We all appreciated Jeanne Baker (my sister) and Joe Folds who are operating chemists at the plant for donating their personal time to take us on this very special

tour.

During the business part of the February meeting I mentioned that we needed some one to assume leadership for the June Field day event. After some painful silence a voice was heard to say " Jim I'll do it if no one else will". This voice was none other then Cliff Shreve N9MKB, who has more problems to tend to then any ten of us together. Why is it that we all enjoy having fun with the club but, so very few want to help make it happen? My wife Anne (KA9YYI) told me to keep the faith, if we ask the rest of the members through the Ham Splatter, someone will contact myself or Cliff to volunteer their help. I hope she's right.

The next Radio Club

**March Meeting:
Friday
March 21, 1997
7:30 PM
The Good Shepherd
United Methodist
Church.**

Meeting is on March 21, 1997, 7:30 P.M, at the United Methodist Good Shepherd Church at Vance and Reed. We're going to do something new. Maybe we'll call it 'test the best' or "stump the experts" or just "Duh". Look around your ham shack for that broken transceiver, microphone, handy talkie or other amateur radio "stuff". If you have a schematic for that " stuff" and it's out of its warranty, write a description of what's wrong with it and bring it in to the meeting. If your name gets drawn the "experts" will have equipment on hand and we will

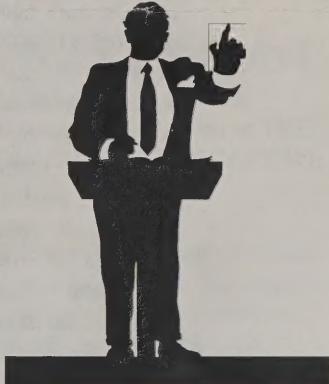
diagnose and explain the problem before your very eyes. If it's a simple problem not requiring parts, we may fix it right there. If not, we will give you a good idea of what you need to do to fix it. Sorry, no computer related equipment this time.

For the April meeting we will have John Goller K9UWA, speak about his Dxpedition to Aruba.

Ok, what you have all been waiting for, this months words of wisdom: Friends may come and go but enemies accumulate. The more you run over a dead cat, the flatter it gets.

73's Jim

February Minutes



1. The February meeting of the Ft. Wayne Radio Club was held at the Ft. Wayne City Water Treatment Plant located at the confluence of the St. Joe, St. Mary's and Maumee Rivers just Northeast of downtown Ft. Wayne. The meeting started at

20:00 hours with an attendance of about 25, and was hosted by President Jim Pliett.

2. The Minutes from the January meeting were approved as read.

3. Treasurer Carl Rittenhouse gave a Treasurer's report. In January the club had expenses totaling \$353.98 and income of \$645.05. As of 21 February, 1997 the club account balances stood at \$3172.57 in the General account, \$3872.83 in the Hamfest account, and \$2354.44 in the Repeater account.

4. Jim Pliett noted that the present balances in the Club accounts indicate that we are reasonably solvent this year. A cash flow analysis indicates that the club needs an income of about \$1500/year over that provided by the present dues structure in order to fund club activities in the same manner that the membership has become accustomed too. (Significant reoccurring club expenses include the production and mailing expenses for the Hamsplatter, the fee for the meeting place, the Spring Banquet and the Christmas Banquet). We were able to build the Treasury up to it's current balance principally due to the net receipts realized from FWRC Hamfests. However, we will not see that source of income again as the Hamfest will not occur this year as in the past. The Board of Directors and club officers are looking for ideas that could help develop the (approximately \$1500/year) income previously mentioned. One

such idea involves leasing one of the buildings at the Allen County Fairgrounds and renting out table space to vendors concurrent with one of the Computer Shows that have been regularly occurring, and extremely well attended at that site. But other ideas are needed as well. Jim solicited same from the membership. Contact him or any Club officer with your suggestions.

5. Jim then gave a brief report on the health of the FWRC's various repeaters. He noted that with the exception of the sensitivity of the .16/.76 machine, our other three machines and the ATV repeater are working normally. He mentioned that he believes he knows what the problem with .16/.76 is, so we should be able to remedy it soon. He also noted that Walt Wood is in the process of building a new audio transmitter for the ATV machine which will significantly improve it's audio performance.

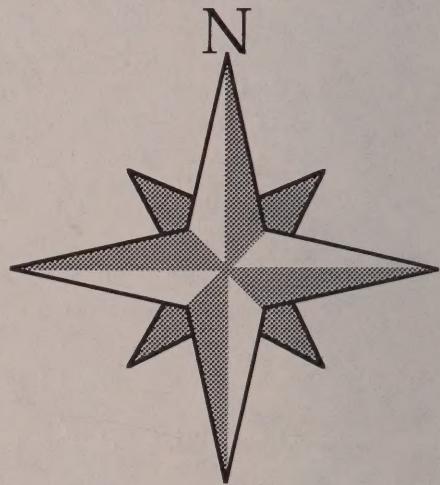
6. Jim announced that the Spring Banquet is scheduled to occur on 9 May this year. It will honor old-timer amateurs from the Ft. Wayne area and will feature videos from a previous Banquet where we were able to honor old-timers.

7. Field Day is coming up. Jim is looking for someone to volunteer to head it up and coordinate the activities necessary to make it a success.

8. The business meeting concluded about 20:35 hours. Following the meeting, we were given a guided tour of the Ft. Wayne City water filtration plant and learned

how the city's water supply is gathered, processed and delivered to our faucets day-in and day-out from the folks who operate the plant.

Respectfully submitted,
AL BURKE, WB9SSE



OLD TYME CHATTER

This past month I was questioned by a ham visitor if I knew what a "One Ringer" meant in ham language. A "One Ringer," was used by members of the Maritime Mobile Net that operated for many years on 14,313 and now operates on 14,300 due to undesirable conditions that now occur on 14,313.

ATT presently doesn't approve the use of one ringers. If you were at sea or in a country that allowed third party and needed to speak via phone to State Side. You could check into the net and state your traffic. If no one was able to handle your patch, and it was urgent, the Net Control would consult his directory and request a relay station to place a one ringer to a known station, who if home could handle your patch. If that station was available to run the

patch, he would check in on the net frequency.

Another type of a "One Ringer," used by the FWDX Assn. was used to alert any of the members who were listed as needing a DX country that was heard operating. I know some of the XYL's didn't approve those aftermidnight calls. The DX packet seems to have eliminated most of those One Ringers.

The first phone patch in Ft. Wayne was built by W9UUN. Next was W9CLF, Ray Hupp an Engineer at GE who purchased Collins gear with a patch. I obtained my Collins patch soon after our oldest son was wounded the third time while in NAM. He was attached to the 1st Marine Div. He was transferred to a hospital ship, then moved to the Clark Airforce Base for surgery. After spending a year at the Norfolk Naval Hospital he reported to Camp Lejeune NC where he instructed in Field Medicine and Vietnamese for a period of year.

Our many thanks to Barry Goldwater who set up a station which was manned by hams and operated 24 hours a day patching the boys back to State Side. One patch I remember, which I ran was from a vessel returning from overseas with a number of our boys. After I had placed the call for one of the young men to his wife, I asked her if she would accept the call. Yes. I gave her the instruction reference using "OVER." Her husband came on and telling her he was on the way home and said "OVER." She was crying and unable to say anything. We tried several "OVER," with the same results.

A few days ago I heard about a man going to see his Doctor as he was having a lot of pain. The Doc said lets run a few tests, put your finger on nose, does that hurt, asked the Doc. Yes the man answered. Now put your finger on your left elbow, that hurt also, finally Doc said place your finger on your heart. Yes that hurts also. Doc said it

appears that you have broken your finger.

HISTORY

Receivers had benefited by the boon of the sensitive, inexpensive crystal detector in 1906, and much of the development and expansion immediately following. Progress on transmitters was also taking place. The spark gap went through various stages of development, emerging in each instance in many forms. In 1903 Deforest had pointed out the efficacy of a "Short, fat spark." The various quenched gaps, the Marconi disk discharger, and finally the Chaffee multiple gap, were respectively successful. It was the era of the fixed spark gap; the ubiquitous rotary gap of later years had not yet been developed.

In 1906, too, radiotelephony first became a practicality. True, high frequency sparks had been used by Fessenden to carry voice during 1900, but their performance was marred by poor articulation and harsh noises. A Fredrick Collins had attempted to build a spark radiotelephone in early years. But it was the Poulsen arc that first applied to provide the requisite continuous waves for the carrying of the voice modulation. At best, however, the scheme was only makeshift, for huge batteries of carbon microphones, which were constantly burning out, were necessary to modulate the powerful arcs.

73 W9TC

Field Day Chairman Needed

We are in need of a field day chairman this year. Field day will be in

the month of June and we just need to have somebody to coordinate the event. Just because you are chairman doesn't mean that you will have to do all the work. It basically will entail making a few phone calls and delegating responsibilities. Field day is a group event, which requires everyone's participation.

Last years field day was a tremendous success. We served over 135 people at the hog roast. Please contact Jim Pliett at 693-9211.



W5YI Report

Ham Operators and Amateur Astronomers Seek Answer to THE AGE-OLD QUESTION. "ARE WE ALONE?"

SETI stands for Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. The acronym was coined in the early 1960's to describe the activities of radio astronomers who were seeking evidence of the existence of intelligent life elsewhere in the Universe. Some SETI searches have turned up a handful of interesting yet unexplained microwave signals which seem to be emanating from space.

NASA officially launched its SETI effort at NASA's Ames Research Center (Mountain View, CA) on Oct. 12, 1992, the 500th anniversary of Columbus' first voyage. The project consumed 1/10th of 1% of NASA's budget.

The SETI League, Inc. was founded in 1994 as a membership supported, non-profit [501(c)(3)], educational and

scientific organization, incorporated in the state of New Jersey. The group maintains its headquarters office and a laboratory in Little Ferry, NJ. Their goal is a worldwide network of thousands of ham operators and amateur astronomy experimenters working together to locate an extra-terrestrial civilization.

SETI League president Richard Factor WA21KL (Kinnelon, NJ) began the non-profit league shortly after Congress killed funding for the NASA SETI program in 1993. Its executive director, H. Paul Shuch, Ph.D., NGTX (Williamsport, PA) took a leave of absence from his position as professor of electronics at Penn State's College of Technology to head the SETI League. Well-known ham operator, astronomer and author, Clifford Stoll, Ph.D. (K7TA, Oakland, CA) is on their advisory board.

The SETI League believes that the probability is that we are not alone in this immense universe. And because our star is young on a cosmic scale, we are the newcomers. "They" have been out there for billions of years. And the chances are that these civilizations are using some form of electromagnetic communications since it is cheap, quick, and universally available.

Before its funding was terminated by Congress, NASA's SETI program consisted of a targeted search of nearby stars and an all-sky survey for unknown, interesting signals. The targeted search has now been assumed by the non-profit California-based SETI institute.

The SETI League plans to survey the sky. No antenna tracking is required, since the entire sky, rather than individual stars, are scanned. While target searching antennas must be constantly moved, sky survey dishes are simply turned by the Earth's rotation.

The sky survey component is better performed with smaller antennas since they can see more sky within their beam patterns. The SETI League achieves reasonable sensitivities through digital signal processing, but the antennas need to scan for extremely long periods of time. The sky survey approach seems

ideally suited to the community of radio amateurs and microwave experimenters.

On Earth Day, April 21, 1996, the SETI League's Project Argus All Sky Survey began with five small radio telescopes. They hope this number will eventually become thousands, each scanning the entire sky for the telltale microwave signatures of alien civilizations.

Perhaps the most ambitious radio astronomy project ever undertaken without Government equipment or funding, Project Argus is an effort to deploy and coordinate roughly 5,000 small radiotelescopes around the world. When fully operational, Project Argus will provide the first ever continuous monitoring of the entire sky.

It is something that NASA never contemplated: real-time, all-sky coverage. The plan is to divide up the sky and assign a different volunteer monitor to each patch, each listening for radio broadcasts from distant planets.

The aim of Project Argus is to prove once and for all that intelligent extra-terrestrial life exists on other planets. The program uses small, quite inexpensive amateur radiotelescopes, built and operated by SETI League members at their individual expense. A typical amateur radio telescope can be built for from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars, depending upon the expertise of the builder. The equipment, although of modest sensitivity, will still be capable to detect microwave radiation from technologically advanced civilizations out to a distance of several hundred light years. A SETI ham could well become the first person to discover an alien civilization.

The typical amateur SETI station consists of a 3 to 5-meter diameter satellite TV dish, a suitable feedhorn, low-noise preamplifier, microwave receiver, personal computer with sound card for analog-to-digital conversion, and appropriate digital signal processing software. But even Yagis, quads, helices and loop yagis can be used. The only penalty is in bandwidth.

The SETI League is currently developing the necessary hardware, software, protocols and procedures for distribution to its members worldwide. Their efforts are concentrated on the so-called "Water-Hole," extending from 1420 to 1660 MHz.

The SETI League currently has some 400 members in 17 countries and 24 SETI stations are now online or under construction. The League (Tel. 201/641-1770 Fax 201/641-1771) encourages interested enthusiasts to use its website located at <http://www.setileague.org/> Their entire Technical Manual is also available online. Members receive a quarterly newsletter, SearchLites.

Thousands of stations may have to work for years to hear "The Signal," ...if indeed they ever do. SETI is definitely a gamble, with long odds but high stakes. To hold interest, the SETI League is planning a number of "on the air activities" of the type you would expect from ham organizations.

They plan to bounce some interesting signals off the moon for their receiving pleasure (and to help test their receivers). And they anticipate generating strange modulation modes as a challenge to their digital signal processing skills, along with some competitions and prizes.

